



WESTMINSTER

Worcester County



[NARRATIVE](#)
[GEOGRAPHY](#)
[GOVERNMENT](#)
[DEMOGRAPHICS](#)
[HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS](#)
[TRANSPORTATION](#)
[CULTURE AND RECREATION](#)
[MISCELLANEOUS](#)



NARRATIVE

Narrative

The Town of Westminster is a suburban hill town which was originally the six-square mile Narragansett Township Number 2, granted to veterans and heirs of veterans of King Philip's War in 1728. Used by Indians for hunting and fishing, the town was founded in 1733 although the first permanent settlement of the town didn't take place until 1737 and the community wasn't accepted as a town until 1770. The community had been garrisoned as an outpost in the French and Indian Wars of the 1740's. The initial grants to settlers were of 60-acre parcels and in the Colonial period the town fit the description of a poor agrarian community. By 1820, Westminster's diversity of religious affiliation was great enough to force the town to stop supporting a single minister with public taxes. There were Armianists, Unitarians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists and Universalists in the town. The community took a moderate position during Shays Rebellion, recommending release of the insurgents who had been captured but registering its opposition to the court system. The new road to Fitchburg was built in 1835 and the Vermont and Massachusetts Railroad reached town in 1848. By 1900 there was East-West electric streetcar service established from Fitchburg to Gardner through Westminster center. In the early 20th century, townspeople made chairs and manufactured paper while an unusually large influx of Finnish immigrants took over the old farms in town and settled in to an agricultural life. Suburban development of the town on attractive lakeside sites and in sections of town with Wachusett Mountain views has been part of its modern day growth.

(Seal supplied by community. Narrative based on information provided by the
Massachusetts Historical Commission)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

North central Massachusetts, bordered by Ashburnham on the north, Fitchburg and Leominster on the east, Princeton and Hubbardston on the south, and Gardner on the west. Westminster is 6 miles west of Fitchburg, 24 miles north of Worcester, 53 miles northwest of Boston, and 198 miles from New York City.

Total Area: 37.34 sq. miles

Land Area: 35.51 sq. miles

Population: 6,191

Density: 174 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Barre Falls Dam Station)

Normal temperature in January.....20.0°F

Normal temperature in July.....67.2°F

Normal annual precipitation.....42.1"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Gardner, Fitchburg, Wachusett Mt., Ashby

Regional Planning Agency

Montachusett

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)

Fitchburg-Leominster



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (978) 874-7400

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Town Coordinator

Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1759

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%
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Total Registered 3,706

Democrats 885 23.9 % Republicans 589 15.9 % Other parties 1 0.0 % Unenrolled Voters 2,231 60.2 %

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Westminster town, Worcester County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	6,907	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	6,907	100.0
Male.....	3,446	49.9	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	77	1.1
Female.....	3,462	50.1	Mexican.....	15	0.2
Under 5 years.....	415	6.0	Puerto Rican.....	40	0.6
5 to 9 years.....	514	7.4	Cuban.....	1	-
10 to 14 years.....	586	8.5	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	21	0.3
15 to 19 years.....	501	7.3	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	6,830	98.9
20 to 24 years.....	253	3.7	White alone.....	6,676	96.7
25 to 34 years.....	705	10.2	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	1,292	18.7	Total population.....	6,907	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	1,308	18.9	In households.....	6,903	99.9
55 to 59 years.....	374	5.4	Householder.....	2,529	36.6
60 to 64 years.....	206	3.0	Spouse.....	1,664	24.1
65 to 74 years.....	402	5.8	Child.....	2,226	32.2
75 to 84 years.....	279	4.0	Own child under 18 years.....	1,741	25.2
85 years and over.....	72	1.0	Other relatives.....	200	2.9
Median age (years).....	38.6	(X)	Under 18 years.....	65	0.9
18 years and over.....	5,067	73.2	Nonrelatives.....	284	4.1
Male.....	2,469	35.7	Unmarried partner.....	151	2.2
Female.....	2,588	37.5	In group quarters.....	4	0.1
21 years and over.....	4,836	70.0	Institutionalized population.....	-	-
62 years and over.....	871	12.6	Noninstitutionalized population.....	4	0.1
65 years and over.....	753	10.9	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	330	4.8	Total households.....	2,529	100.0
Female.....	423	6.1	Family households (families).....	1,954	77.3
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	933	36.9
One race.....	6,865	99.4	Married-couple family.....	1,664	65.8
White.....	6,734	97.5	With own children under 18 years.....	770	30.4
Black or African American.....	32	0.5	Female householder, no husband present.....	206	8.1
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	10	0.1	With own children under 18 years.....	115	4.5
Asian.....	79	1.1	Nonfamily households.....	575	22.7
Asian Indian.....	4	0.1	Householder living alone.....	447	17.7
Chinese.....	24	0.3	Householder 65 years and over.....	168	6.6
Filipino.....	2	-	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	991	39.2
Japanese.....	4	0.1	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	527	20.8
Korean.....	18	0.3	Average household size.....	2.73	(X)
Vietnamese.....	10	0.1	Average family size.....	3.09	(X)
Other Asian ¹	17	0.2	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-	Total housing units.....	2,694	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	-	-	Occupied housing units.....	2,529	93.9
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	165	6.1
Samoa.....	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	-	-	occasional use.....	85	3.2
Some other race.....	10	0.1	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	0.7	(X)
Two or more races.....	42	0.6	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	3.0	(X)
Race alone or in combination with one			HOUSING TENURE		
or more other races: ³			Occupied housing units.....	2,529	100.0
White.....	6,775	98.1	Owner-occupied housing units.....	2,169	85.8
Black or African American.....	45	0.7	Renter-occupied housing units.....	360	14.2
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	26	0.4	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.84	(X)
Asian.....	87	1.3	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.08	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-			
Some other race.....	17	0.2			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State: 0

Conventional Federal: 0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP: 0

Federal (Section 8): 0



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

The principal highway of northern Worcester County, where Westminister is located, is State Route 2 which runs across northern Massachusetts. State Route 140 and Interstate 190 connect the region to Worcester. The Springfield Terminal Railway line parallels Route 2 and provides access to the network of intermodal facilities serving central and eastern Massachusetts.

Major Highways

Principal highways are State Route 2, which runs E-W across northern Massachusetts, and State Route 140.

Rail

Commuter rail service to North Station, Boston, is available in the neighboring towns of Fitchburg (travel time 85-94 min.; no MBTA parking) and Leominster (travel time 78-87 min.; 60 spaces). Freight rail service is available from the Springfield Terminal Railway. Contact number: (978) 663-1073

Bus

Westminister is a member of the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MRTA), which provides paratransit services to the elderly and disabled through the Council on Aging.

Other

The Fitchburg Municipal Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility, is easily accessible. It has 2 asphalt runways 4,511' and 3,502' long. Instrument approaches available: Non-precision.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

(American Association of Museums)

None

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

None

Long Term Care

None

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

Maranatha Rest Home

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.